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35+ EASY HOLIDAY HOSTING TIPS from the PROS

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tip PUT OUT SOME ORANGES & CHOCOLATES FOR GUESTS

+ SET THE TABLE: ideas for every style

23 CHRISTMAS TREES TO INSPIRE

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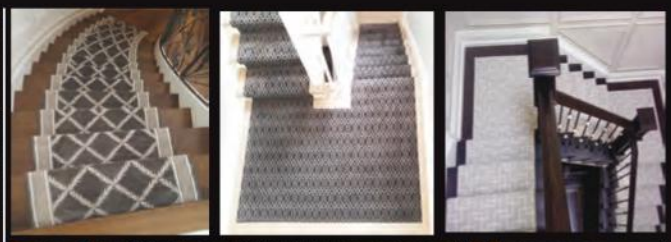

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styleathome DECEMBER 2016

Cut glass stemware and a lush floral centrepiece lend drama and sophistication to this tablescape.

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DECORATING

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Get Style at Home for your iPad, with additional how-to video content, bonus image galleries and more. Download it on the App Store today.

ON THE COVER
A muted palette serves as a perfect backdrop for displaying boughs of greenery and other festive trimmings **98**

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holiday BEST

Do you see what we see? In a season known for the classic, the traditional and the handed down, there's not always room for incorporating trends. But this year, we've noticed a few new characters in the Christmas cast – and they're popping up all through this issue. So in true Style at Home fashion, we invite you to add a little oomph to your decorating scheme with these stylish touches.

1. whimsical ornaments

From forest friends and seaworthy specimens to sparkly stars and collectible keys, decorations beyond the customary balls and bells has definitely taken over.

2. natural-fibre ribbons

There's a yen for the rustic this season, and it's apparent in the plethora of linen, hemp and burlap ribbons adorning gifts, mantels, staircases and more.

3. seeded eucalyptus

Usually used as a filler for other arrangements, no-fuss eucalyptus, with its long life and fresh scent, takes centre stage this holiday.

4. cakes on pedestals

Goodbye ubiquitous fruitcake, hello almost any other kind of heavenly gateau you can think of, sitting pretty in the dining room atop an elegant stand.

5. black & white gift wrap

Not just for the dramatic at heart, the selection of duotone papers has widened to include fanciful patterns and prints that appeal to both young and old.

Erin

Erin McLaughlin erin@styleathome.com

@erinmclaughlin1
instagram.com/styleathomeeditor

5 holiday trends we can't get enough of

PHOTOGRAPHY, BROGAN MCNAB FOR THE SEPTEMBER, THESEPTEMBER.COM (PORTRAIT), JANIS NICOLAY, ROBIN STUBBERT, JANIS NICOLAY, ASHLEY CAPP, JANIS NICOLAY, JUMPER, SEZANE, SEZANE.COM; NECKLACE, TIFFANY & CO., TIFFANY.CA

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ONE ROOM two budgets

This is not your typical dining room.

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CHERISHED CHALLENGE

My favourite aspect of the magazine is the High or Low column. The first thing I do when I receive the latest edition is flip to that story to determine which room is high and which is low. I was let down when it didn't appear in the November 2016 issue. The new layout is great, but I miss being able to compare the rooms.

KAREN CHINNERY, VIA EMAIL

I have subscribed to Style at Home for years and love the High or Low column. My daughters and I always race to see who figures it out first. For this reason, I was disappointed that the format changed in your November 2016 issue. Please go back to the original. Thanks for entertaining us every month!

WENDY WATSON, STONY MOUNTAIN, MB

STYLISH SNAPSHOTS

As a photographer, I am always on the lookout for fresh and unique ideas to inspire my work, and Style at Home has never let me down. I enjoy every issue. Keep up the great work!

SHANNON GREY, EDMONTON

LEISURE TIME

It's been a crazy busy weekend of work, family time and Thanksgiving celebrating. So on this chilly holiday Monday, I'm going to sip my tea and read my fave magazine to recharge for the week ahead!

@MZ_MCMULLY

YOU SPOKE, WE LISTENED

We would like to thank all of our devoted readers for sharing their thoughts on our High or Low column's new look. We've heard you. **Starting next issue – fittingly, our High or Low edition – the column will return to its original format.**

WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Email us at letters@styleathome.com or write to us at Letters, Style at Home, 25 Sheppard Ave. W., Suite 100, Toronto, ON M2N 6S7.

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style news

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PAINT PALETTE OF THE MONTH

HEART'S CONTENT
PPG1050-6, PPG Paints, ppgvoiceofcolor.com.

Behr **GALACTIC TINT**
N510-2, The Home Depot, homedepot.ca.

CLOUD WHITE OC-130, Benjamin Moore, benjaminmoore.ca.

Beauti-Tone **ON THE GREENS**
C34-1-1561-3, Home Hardware, homehardware.ca.

aged to perfection

Holiday dinners call for distinguished rooms that make us think of Christmases past, and designer Dee Dee Taylor Eustace delivers with this classic space. Juxtaposed with light grey walls, all-white place settings and warm wooden furnishings, the dusty rose chair upholstery is positively scrumptious.

PHOTOGRAPHY, DONNA GRIFFITH; DESIGN, DEE DEE TAYLOR EUSTACE, TAYLORHANNAHARCHITECT.COM

Winnipeg's Josie Guenther screen-prints and frays each of these playful napkins by hand.

Stoneware **SOUP BOWLS,** 6", $25 each, Mud and Stone, mudandstone.etsy.com.

Linen **NAPKINS** in Blue Wave, $50 per set of 4, Josie Guenther, josie-guenther.etsy.com.

Glazed porcelain Groove **MUG** in Gray, $30, Mud and Stone, mudandstone.etsy.com.

SET THE TABLE, EH?

GO LOCAL FOR YOUR HOLIDAY TABLESCAPE WITH SERVEWARE HANDMADE RIGHT HERE IN CANADA. Each of these pieces is lovingly carved, thrown, dyed or otherwise crafted for a sophisticated organic look. Best of all, you never have to leave your home to stock up – all of them are sold through online marketplace Etsy.

Black walnut **SERVING SPOON,** $30, March 8 Studio, march8-studio.etsy.com.

Porcelain **CREAM & SUGAR SET** with spoon in Gray, $60, Isabelle Huot Ceramix, isabellehuotceramix.etsy.com.

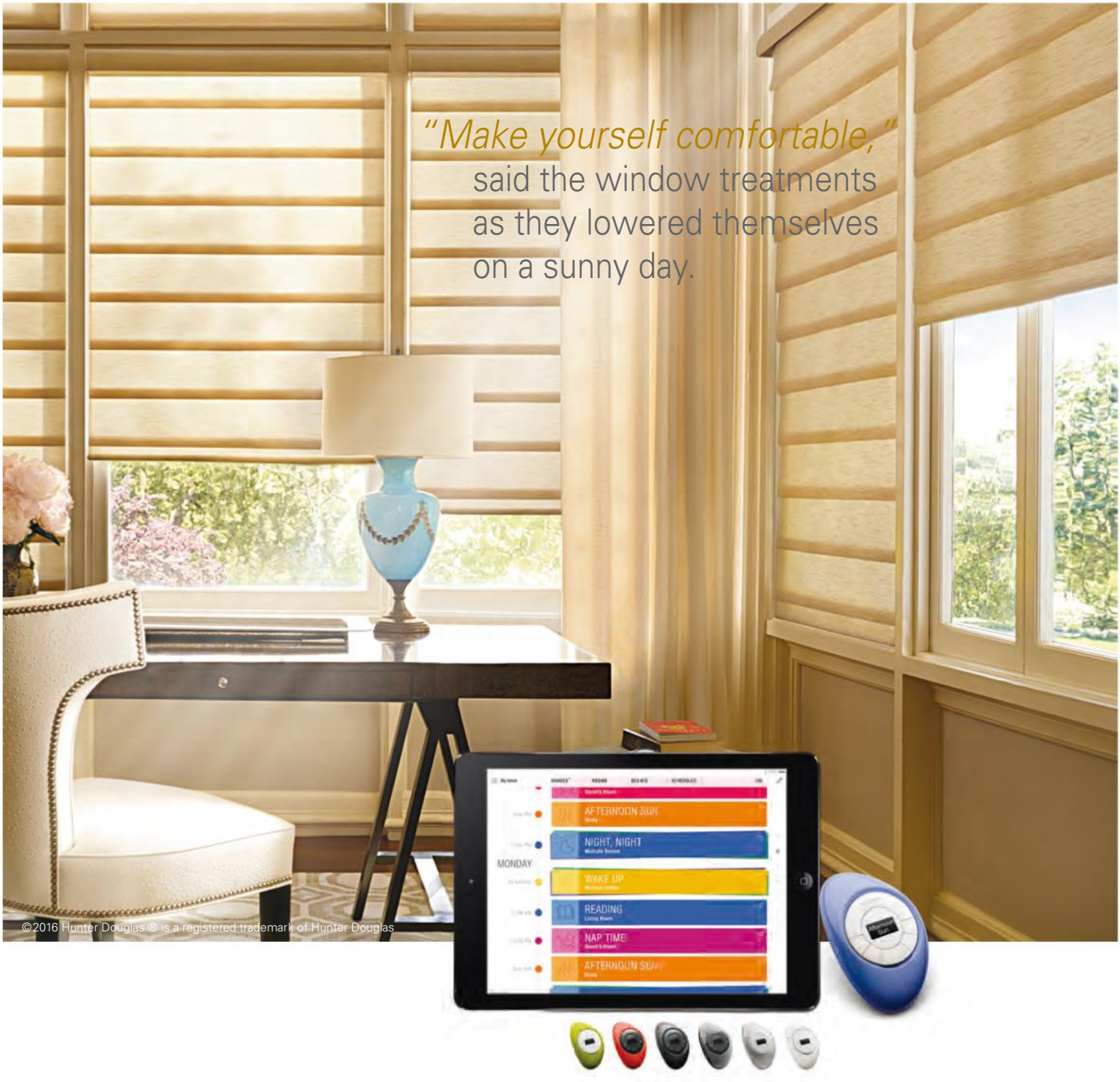
Large stoneware **BOWL,** 12", $90, Terre Ferme Pottery, terreferme-pottery.etsy.com.

This stunner has more than just staying power: Its production supports and empowers artisans.

LACY NUMBER

It may look like an optical illusion, but this bowl is indeed crocheted. Handmade by South African artisans, the woven textile hardens into shape thanks to a plant-based resin.

Luna Collection resined hemp Peacock Stitch **BOWL** in Chalky White, 24", $229, The Grand Collective, thegrandcollective.ca.



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AU NATUREL

BLU DOT LAYS BARE A SIMPLE TRUTH: WHEN WOODEN SLABS HAVE A GRAIN THIS BEAUTIFUL, YOU DON'T COVER THEM UP – YOU MAKE THEM THE STARS OF YOUR LATEST STORAGE UNIT COLLECTION.

Blu Dot wood and powder-coated steel 3-door Clad **SIDEBOARD** in Hickory & White, $3,119, Urban Mode, urbanmode.com.

WISH LIST

This modern take on a mid-century icon feels familiar and fresh at the same time.

THOUGH CALLING TO MIND THE MID-CENTURY MODERN CLASSIC WISHBONE, this stylish bentwood and oiled paper cord chair handcrafted by Ontario-based furniture maker Ian Birchall boasts a quirky flair all its own, making it one covetable seat.

Oak Design One **SIDECHAIR,** $1,500, Urban Country Chair, urbancountrychair.com.

FESTIVE FRILLS

Are you thinking trendy or traditional for this year's tree decorations? Why not a little of both? We love these quintessentially Christmassy skirts paired with glam contemporary ornaments.

Wool, nylon and cotton **TREE SKIRTS,** from $80, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

ORNAMENTS, from $7 per pair, H&M Home, hm.com.

Mouth-blown glass Ripple **CARAFE,** $51, and **GLASSES,** $60 per 4-piece set, Ferm Living, fermliving.com.

RIPPLE EFFECT

START YOUR BAR CART DISPLAY OFF RIGHT WITH GLASSWARE THAT'S NATTY AND NIMBLE. SPORTING A CHIC RIBBED FINISH, THE GLASSES ARE DESIGNED TO NESTLE NEATLY WITHIN ONE ANOTHER.

JUST DESSERTS

A sweets table is worthy of a dedicated display. **FOR A FUN MIX, ADD A FEW PLATES TO YOUR EXISTING COLLECTION,** including both plain and graphic styles and varying the sizes to accommodate different confections.

1 Stoneware Joshua **SALAD PLATE** in Ivory, $28 US per set of 4, Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.

2 Glazed stoneware Indigo Blue Batik **DESSERT PLATE,** $55 per 4-piece set, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

3 PC Home stoneware Holiday Icon **SIDE PLATE,** $5, Loblaws, Real Canadian Superstore, superstore.ca.

4 Porcelain Mercer **APPETIZER PLATES,** $5 each, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

PHOTOGRAPHY, MAYA VISNYEI; STYLING, CLAIRE STUBBS

chocolate-mascarpone *tarts*

We've all been at a dinner party and witnessed the dessert snub – a guest's nose not-so-subtly turned up at something the host or hostess has laboured over. That will never be the case with these *delectable mini tarts,* thank you very much. *Simple to make and easy to customize,* they come with options to suit every palate. We'll raise a dessert fork to that!

RECIPE
JENNIFER BARTOLI

PHOTOGRAPHY
MAYA VISNYEI

FOOD STYLING
CLAIRE STUBBS

PROP STYLING
ANN MARIE FAVOT

DREAMING OF A White Chocolate CHEESECAKE

CRAN-ORANGE WHITE CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

Prep: 25 min. | **Total Time:** 6 hours 30 min. | **Makes:** 16 servings

WHAT YOU NEED

- 12 shortcake biscuits, finely crushed (about 1 ¾ cups)
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 4 pkg. (250 g each) Philadelphia Brick Cream Cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 4 oz. (⅔ of 170 g pkg.) Baker's White Chocolate, melted
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp. corn starch
- 1 Tbsp. zest and 1/2 cup juice from 2 large oranges, divided
- 1½ cups fresh cranberries

MAKE IT

Heat oven to 325°F.

Combine biscuit crumbs and butter; press onto bottom of 9-inch springform pan. Bake 10 min.

Meanwhile, beat cream cheese, 3/4 cup sugar and vanilla in large bowl with mixer until blended. Add chocolate; mix well. Add eggs, 1 at a time, mixing on low speed after each just until blended.

Pour cream cheese batter over crust. Bake 1 hour to 1 hour 5 min. or until centre is almost set. Run knife around rim of pan to loosen cake; cool before removing rim. Refrigerate cheesecake 4 hours.

Meanwhile, mix corn starch and 1 Tbsp. orange juice until blended. Bring cranberries, remaining orange juice and remaining sugar to boil in saucepan on medium-high heat; simmer on low heat 6 min. or until cranberries are softened, stirring frequently. Stir in corn starch mixture; bring to boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir 1 min. or until thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in orange zest. Cool. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Spoon cranberry glaze over cheesecake just before serving.

It must be the Philly®

INGREDIENTS

MAKES 8 TARTS

Chocolate Pastry

- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- ½ tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- Pinch salt

Mascarpone Filling

- 275 g mascarpone cheese
- ½ cup icing sugar
- ¾ cup 35% whipping cream, whipped

DIRECTIONS

To make the pastry, beat the butter with the sugar in a medium bowl until light and fluffy; beat in the egg yolk and vanilla until combined. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt; add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture and stir until smooth.

Divide the pastry among eight 4" mini tart pans with removable bottoms, pressing the pastry into the bottoms and up the sides of the pans; prick the bottoms all over with a fork. Refrigerate the pastry shells on a rimmed baking sheet until chilled, about 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line each shell with foil and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake on the bottom rack of the oven for 8 minutes. Gently remove the weights and foil; continue to bake the shells until the pastry is no longer shiny, about 10 minutes more. Let the shells cool in the pans on a rack.

Meanwhile, make the filling. In a large bowl, beat together the mascarpone cheese and icing sugar until smooth. Fold in the whipped cream in three additions. Divide the mascarpone mixture among separate small bowls. Add your flavourings of choice and scoop the mascarpone filling into the tart shells. Add your desired toppings; serve.

Have fun experimenting with your own FLAVOUR COMBINATIONS – the possibilities are endless.

FOUR OF OUR FAVOURITE FLAVOURS

1. double raspberry
Fold a dash of raspberry liqueur into the mascarpone filling; top the tart with fresh raspberries, strawberries and blueberries.

2. rose & pistachio
Stir rosewater into the mascarpone filling; top the tart with edible rose petals and chopped toasted pistachios.

3. mocha
Leave the mascarpone filling as is; top the tart with chocolate-covered espresso beans and white chocolate shavings.

4. pomegranate mint
Add a few drops of mint extract into the mascarpone filling; top the tart with pomegranate seeds.

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PRODUCERS JENNIFER BARTOLI & SARA CATION

gourmet gifts

Satisfy even the most discerning epicureans on your list with one of these fashionable foodie-approved finds.

1

JUICED UP

A heart-smart treat for the health food aficionado in your life, this carefully curated six-pack of cold-pressed juices contains almost two pounds of fruit and veg in every bottle and will last in the fridge for more than a month!

Cold-pressed **JUICES,** 500 ml each, $42 per 6-piece pack, Dose Juice, dosejuice.com.

2

WATER WORLD

The water bottle to top all water bottles, S'well's keeps drinks cold for 24 hours and warm for 12. Ideal for an active gal or guy on the go, this petite option will perfectly fit inside a purse (or murse).

S'well stainless steel **WATER BOTTLE** in Shadow, 265 ml, $38, Indigo, indigo.ca.

3

CHEESE, PLEASE

Nothing says holiday time quite like a good cheeseboard (make sure there's some baked brie with pecans on there!). The lace-motif detailing on this one will certainly make any selection of cheeses and chutneys shine.

Ceramic Lacework **CHEESEBOARD,** $38 US, Anthropologie, anthropologie.com.

4

COPPER FEEL

This elegant Art Deco-style coffee dripper is for your friend who has one foot planted firmly at home and the other off in some distant Parisian patisserie.

Hario stainless copper **COFFEE DRIPPER,** $100, Indigo, indigo.ca.

5

HOLY COFFEE, BATMAN!

If the Bat Cave had a coffee maker, this would be it. Nespresso's latest boasts a badass matte black finish befitting anyone in need of a caffeine jolt before saving Gotham City.

VertuoLine **COFFEE MACHINE** in Matte Black, $249, VertuoLine Variations Limited Edition Grand Crus **COFFEE PODS,** $12 per pack of 10, Nespresso, nespresso.ca.

Check out our sweet and savoury breakfast boards on page 118 to get inspired beyond the standard cheese selection.

POISE VATA

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COOL PITTA

Cooling tea with natural ingredients.

VIGOUR KAPHA

Uplifting tea with natural ingredients.

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COLONEL MUSTARD

This high-ranking mustard deserves your salute. Flavoured with decadent wine and truffles – and only available for a limited time – it's a covetable condiment fit for any top official.

Black Truffle and Chablis **MUSTARD,** 130 ml, $43 US, Maille, maille.ca.

6

Meet the perfect match for homemade steak frites.

8

CHIC SIPS

These pretty, precious and feminine flasks are almost too stylish to sully with alcohol – but everyone has a friend who would!

Stainless steel Odeme **FLASKS,** 90 ml, $29 US each, West Elm, westelm.com.

7

Stamp Art **MUGS,** $19 each, Starbucks, starbucks.ca.

INTO THE WILD

These striking mugs echo exotic corners of the earth that yield top-notch coffee, from Sumatra to Kenya to Costa Rica. Pair a mug with beans from the same region for a gift guaranteed to please any java junkie.

9

STYLE STRAIN

This vintage-look colander is a timeless classic that takes an everyday kitchen tool from dull to display-worthy.

Copper-plated steel **COLANDER** in Gold, $34 US, Anthropologie, anthropologie.com.

FRENCH KISS

Modern and minimalistic, delicate and demure, this Scandi-chic French press in pale pink (with a pretty copper detail) is not only a beautiful vessel for your morning brew, but also an ideal addition to any open shelf.

Ceramic **FRENCH PRESS** in Sand, 850 ml, $120 US, Yield Design Co., yielddesignco.etsy.com.

10

GRILL ON THE GO

11

No one should ever find themselves camping, tailgating or picnicking without freshly grilled meat close at hand. And thanks to this portable grill, your loved ones will never have to.

Wild & Wolf Portable **BARBECUE,** $94, Shop AGO, shop.ago.net.

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my home for the holidays

It's that time of year again. The time when friends and family gather to celebrate the magic of the season. That's why Metro is always there, with all the ingredients you need, to create perfect holiday moments. From our family to yours, happy holidays from your neighbourhood Metro.

my metro

OUR GUIDE TO BEING *party* PERFECT

We asked the experts, consulted the pros and tapped into the minds of the most talented to create the ultimate handbook for the holiday hostess. But be forewarned: With these tips and tricks in your back pocket, entertaining will seem so easy that you'll be searching for any excuse to throw a party. Groundhog Day, anyone?

PRODUCER SARA CATION

THROW THE PERFECT *party*

One of Canada's most prestigious butlers, server to the stars – even, once, to the Queen! – and general manager of Azuridge Estate Hotel in Alberta, Clarence McLeod tells us the dos and don'ts of a sovereign-worthy soiree.

DO: DELEGATE. EVEN IF IT'S SIMPLY ASKING SOMEONE TO ANSWER THE DOOR SO YOU WON'T HAVE TO COME OUT WITH FLOUR ON YOUR FACE. ALL HOSTS NEED HELP, NO MATTER HOW ORGANIZED OR TALENTED THEY ARE.

DON'T: Pair fancy dishware with everyday options. When you go with your best, stick with it. Use fine china with crystal, not glass, and silverware instead of stainless steel.

DO: Layer your place settings. Stack dishes in the order they'll be used and have cutlery for each course. Unsure of which way to go? Start from the outside with your first course and work your way in to the last.

DO: Have a seating plan for any dinner party of more than six.

DON'T: Seat quiet people beside each other. When making your plan, always start with the most dynamic person in the centre and then alternate between reserved and outgoing guests. Match up people who have similar interests to ensure ease of conversation.

DON'T: HOLD UP DINNER IF A GUEST HAS LET YOU KNOW THEY'LL BE LATE.

DO: WAIT 20 MINUTES IF A LATE GUEST HASN'T CHECKED IN YET.

DO: Ask to take guests' cocktail glasses before dinner starts. Having those extra tumblers cluttering the table will ruin the aesthetic of your place settings. Plus, you've already carefully chosen which wines will highlight the flavours of your menu, and a guest's vodka soda might compromise that.

remember that timing is everything

Plan your party weeks in advance with a work-back schedule so you don't miss a beat.

bring out your best

Don't let your wedding china sit around collecting dust! This is the special occasion you've been waiting for, so proudly put it on display.

consider the designated drivers

Pick a perfect wine to pair with dinner, but don't forget to offer non-alcoholic options, too.

PHOTOGRAPHY, ISTOCKPHOTO

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LG
Life's Good

SERVE THE PERFECT *dinner*

Celebrity chef Mark McEwan is no stranger to dinner parties – both hosting and attending them. Here, he shares the secrets to serving in style.

1 PEOPLE GET SO INTIMIDATED WHEN IT COMES TO **WINE PAIRINGS.** I'M MORE LIBERAL. I LIKE A BRIGHT WHITE WINE LIKE STONELEIGH'S SAUVIGNON BLANC, AND **PINOT NOIR IS MY GO-TO RED.** IT PAIRS WELL WITH ANYTHING: DUCK, BEEF, PORK – EVEN HALIBUT! MY FRIEND PUT IT BEST: **"DO YOU LIKE THE WINE? THAT'S GREAT! DRINK IT!"**

2 When it comes to hors d'oeuvres, plan for 10 pieces per person for a cocktail party. For a dinner, four will work – you want people to be hungry when they sit down to eat.

3 Don't over-complicate the meal. Just pick your main protein – whether it's brined ham or a prime rib roast – and choose a few seasonal sides. **HAVING FOUR ITEMS ON A PLATE IS PLENTY.**

4 Don't try to achieve too much, make the menu too elaborate or cook too many dishes. It will get you flustered, and a stressed-out host is fun for no one.

5 PREPARE A MENU THAT YOU CAN HAVE 90 PERCENT DONE AHEAD OF TIME WITH 10 PERCENT TO FINISH WHEN GUESTS ARRIVE. I THINK OF EVERYTHING I NEED AND LAY IT OUT – SERVING PLATTERS AND UTENSILS IN THE EXACT PLACES I'LL NEED THEM, CONDIMENTS ON THE TABLE – SO I'M NOT HURRIEDLY SEARCHING THROUGH DRAWERS WHEN COMPANY'S OVER. I PREP EVERYTHING IN ADVANCE BUT SAVE ONE ITEM TO FINISH IN FRONT OF PEOPLE. IT COULD BE FRESH GNOCCHI (FROM DOUGH I'VE ALREADY PREPARED) OR A BEAUTIFULLY LAYERED SALAD.

salad

Layer your elements in advance and make a show of tossing them together at the dinner table.

prime rib

Prep it and all its elements – the side vegetables, the au jus – ahead of time and leave the Yorkshire pudding for last.

yorkshire pudding

It's a great last-minute dish to make in front of guests.

PHOTOGRAPHY, ISTOCKPHOTO

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SET THE *perfect* TABLE

We're smitten with the Scandi-rustic look of this seasonal tablescape.

A DINNER PARTY that has guests raving for days is all in the details. Take this masterfully muted, fashionably festive and quietly romantic rustic Scandinavian tablescape. We love its creamy taupe, linen white and pale minty green colour scheme – a fresh take on tradition topped with subtle seasonal elements like sprigs of fresh evergreen and soft touches of gold. But even better are the elements you don't notice at first glance like the effortless DIYs that even an uncrafty hostess can easily achieve. Here are the highlights.

LEARN TO MAKE THESE FESTIVE CRAFTS – AND MORE! – AT **styleathome.com/rocher**

1 WRAP STAR Candles are key to tabletop mood lighting, but these festive votives look just as fabulous when they're not lit. Gussied up with burlap wrap effortlessly secured by a tiny tree-shaped clothespin and a deer-stamped strip of cotton, they lend a quintessentially rustic-chic vibe. Frayed edges keep this craft virtually fuss-free but also require the use of battery-powered tea lights rather than open flames.

2 CHAIR CHEER You've outdone yourself with this year's tablescape, but don't overlook your chairs! What a perfect place to underscore your seating arrangement with ready-made mini buntings stencilled with snowflakes. Each topped with a gift tag and a sprig of greenery, the unexpected adornments are an easy way to add extra details that are sure to impress guests.

3 SLEIGH AWAY These sweet place cards are not only wintry and whimsical, they're also easy and inexpensive to execute: Simply tie a handwritten gift tag to a wooden toy sleigh (which, like the rest of the supplies, can be found at any craft store) with ribbon or yarn that matches your colour scheme. Top it off with two FERRERO ROCHER® chocolates to treat guests with a decadent sweet to enjoy later – and maybe even dub you the host with the most!

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CREATE THE PERFECT *cocktails*

Pop, fizz, clink – a lively "cheers!" is the unofficial start of any great celebration, so take things up a notch this season with these refreshing champagne cocktails that are sure to make you the toast of the town.

Blackberry Lime Fizz

MAKES 2

- 12 fresh blackberries
- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 tbsp simple syrup
- 2 oz St-Germain elderflower liqueur
- 4 fresh basil or sage leaves + extra, for garnish (optional)
- 8 oz chilled pink champagne or Prosecco

Place 6 blackberries on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and freeze until solid (the frozen fruit will help keep your cocktail nicely chilled). Place the lime juice, simple syrup, elderflower liqueur, basil leaves and remaining blackberries in a cocktail shaker and muddle to release the flavours. Add some ice and shake well. Strain into two coupes and top with the champagne. Garnish with the frozen blackberries and an extra fresh basil leaf, if desired.

Satsuma Sparkle

MAKES 2

- 12 frozen cranberries + extra, for garnish
- 4 oz freshly squeezed satsuma or tangerine juice
- 2 oz Grand Marnier orange liqueur
- 8 oz chilled champagne or sparkling wine
- Sugared red currants, for garnish (optional)*
- Orange zest strips, for garnish (optional)

Muddle the frozen cranberries against a handful of ice in a cocktail shaker until they burst. Pour in the satsuma juice and Grand Marnier. Shake until ice-cold and then strain into two coupes. Top with the champagne and garnish with a few extra frozen cranberries – or, if desired, some sugared red currants – and a strip of orange zest.

*To make sugared currants or cranberries, dip the fruit lightly into whisked egg whites and then into some fine sugar. Let dry for 20 minutes before using.

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING, CLAIRE STUBBS; PHOTOGRAPHY, MAYA VISNYEI; PROP STYLING, ANN MARIE FAVOT

Grapefruit Rosé Mimosa

MAKES 2

- 4 oz freshly squeezed ruby grapefruit juice
- 2 oz Lillet Rosé
- 1 squeeze fresh lime juice
- 4 fresh mint leaves + extra, for garnish (optional)
- 8 oz chilled pink champagne

Place the grapefruit juice, Lillet Rosé, lime juice and mint leaves in a cocktail shaker with a handful of ice. Shake until muddled and nicely chilled and then strain into two coupes. Top with the champagne and fresh mint leaves, if desired.

Ginger Pear Bellini

MAKES 2

- 1 sugar pear
- 2 oz sparkling pear juice or ginger ale
- 2 oz French ginger liqueur
- 2 oz cognac liqueur
- 8 drops black walnut bitters (optional)
- 8 oz chilled champagne, Prosecco or cava

Slice the pear very thinly and place the slices on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet; freeze until solid (the frozen pear slices will help keep the champagne cocktail icy cold).

Place the pear juice, French ginger and cognac liqueurs and the black walnut bitters in a cocktail shaker along with a handful of ice; shake well. Place 2 frozen pear slices each into two flutes. Strain the liquid from the shaker into the flutes and top with the champagne.

POUR THE PERFECT *drinks*

You may not be a mixologist, but these signature drinks will have guests convinced you've been taking secret bartending lessons. Word to the wise: Leave the fancy bottle spins to the professionals.

THE WELDER

1½ oz Forty Creek Premium Barrel Whisky
½ oz Aperol
1 oz lemon juice
1 oz chili syrup
1 chili pepper, for garnish

Pour the whisky, Aperol, lemon juice and chili syrup into an ice-filled cocktail shaker and shake well. Strain into an ice-filled lowball glass and top with the chili pepper.

Premium Barrel Select **WHISKY,** 750 ml, $27, Forty Creek Whisky, fortycreekwhisky.com

BRANDY CRUSTA

Freshly squeezed lemon juice
Granulated sugar, for garnish
2 oz Hennessy Very Special Cognac
Splash orange curaçao
Dash Angostura bitters
Peel of half a lemon, for garnish

Prepare a rock glass by moistening the rim with a touch of the lemon juice and dipping it in the sugar. Combine the cognac, curaçao, more lemon juice and the bitters in a shaker. Shake and strain into the glass. Add 1 ice cube and the lemon peel garnish.

Very Special **COGNAC,** 750 ml, $61, Hennessy, hennessy.com.

JAMAICAN HONEY SOOTHER

2 parts Appleton Estate Rare Blend 12 Year Old Rum
¼ part honey
½ part fresh lime juice

Pour the rum, honey and lemon juice into a cocktail shaker half-filled with ice cubes. Shake well, strain into a coupette cocktail glass.

Rare Blend 12 Year Old **RUM,** 750 ml, $41, Appleton Estate, appletonestate.com.

DARK & STORMY

2 oz Chic Choc Spiced Rum
Ginger beer
Lime wedge, for garnish

Fill a highball glass with ice cubes. Add the spiced rum and then top it off with the ginger beer. Stir, and garnish with the lime wedge.

Chic Choc **SPICED RUM,** 750 ml, $34, Domaine Pinnacle, domainepinnacle.com.

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DECORATE THE PERFECT *guest room*

Family visiting from out of town? Party people celebrated too hard and need a place to crash? Here's expert advice on how to always be ready for overnighters.

MARTHA STEWART

"You should sleep in your guest room one night to see what's missing or what will make it a nicer spot. I have a big house in Maine with 12 bedrooms, and I sleep in every one of them once a year to make sure they're comfortable."

MARK HAMPTON

"A writing table is a great convenience in a guest room – one might even say a necessity. Here the host can place some flowers from the garden, a few books, a bowl of fruit, a very good light and some writing paper in the drawer."

REBECCA ATWOOD

"A guest room can have your aesthetic preferences, but it should also address the care and welcoming feeling you want to extend.... Keep guest room palettes graphic and simple and then add [pops of colour] with pillows and accessories that you can change as desired."

flowers

Fresh blooms will brighten anyone's day.

writing desk

A small desk by a window offers a private place for company to check emails.

books

Have a few favourite books on hand so guests can unwind when they have some downtime.

PHOTOGRAPHY, KIM CHRISTIE, FADIL BERISHA (MARTHA PORTRAIT), MARIANNE BARCELLONA/THE LIFE IMAGES COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES (MARK PORTRAIT), EMILY JOHNSTON (REBECCA PORTRAIT), ISTOCKPHOTO(3)

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GIVE THE PERFECT *hostess gift*

Forget the wine – say thanks to your holiday host with one of these less-than-obvious options.

Potted paperwhites suit the season and match anyone's holiday decor.

1

2

3

"WHEN YOU GIVE YOUR HOST CUT FLOWERS, *you've given them another job to do.*" – CHEF MARK MCEWAN

4

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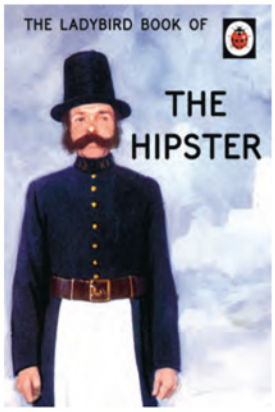

11

13

14

PRODUCER, MORGAN LINDSAY

1. SCENTS & SENSIBILITY
Scent Surround **DIFFUSER** in English Pomegranate Noir, $95, Jo Malone London, jomalone.ca.

2. CLEAN-CUT MEN
Red Grip Gingerbread Man **COOKIE CUTTERS,** $10 per 3-piece set, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

3. SKIN SO SOFT
Meraki **HAND CREAM** in Cotton Haze, $29, Drake General Store, drakegeneralstore.ca.

4. BOOZY BONBONS
Champagne Collection **MACARONS,** $25 per 20-piece box, Delysées Toronto, delysees.com.

5. THANKS GIVING
Blank Swan Lake **NOTECARDS,** $15 per 12-piece set, Indigo, indigo.ca.

6. FRAMES OF MIND
Faceted Geo **FRAME,** 4″ x 4″, $10, Metallic Geo **FRAME,** 5″ x 7″, $8, HomeSense, homesense.ca.

7. YEAR FULL OF FLAVOUR
2017 Herb Garden **WALL CALENDAR,** $18 US, Rifle Paper Co., riflepaperco.com.

8. HEX MATE
Concrete Hex **COASTERS** in Gold, $30 per set of 4, MindThe-Minimal, mindthe-minimal.etsy.com.

9. SHAPELY SUCCULENTS
Sapele wood Geometric **PLANTER,** $40, Adrian Martinus, adrianmartinus.etsy.com.

10. SIP 'N' RUN
Kate Spade New York Deco Dots **TRAVEL MUG,** $40, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

11. BEARDED WISDOM
The Ladybird Book of the Hipster **BOOK** by Jason Hazeley and Joel Morris, $13, Indigo, indigo.ca.

12. TOWEL TIDINGS
Cotton Eve **DISH TOWELS,** $22 per pair, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

13. CLASSIC CANADIANA
HBC Collection **BOTTLE OPENER,** $15, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

14. GIFT WITH A TWIST
Nostalgia Edition Twister **BOARD GAME** in tin box, $80, Hudson's Bay, thebay.com.

PRODUCERS ANN MARIE FAVOT & MORGAN LINDSAY

TEXT MARY LEVITSKI

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID HILLEGAS

ONE ROOM *two budgets*

With a livable palette of white, caramel and tan, this guest room in an Alabama lake house designed by Andrew Brown boasts coziness and elegance. Turn the page for key pieces to reconstruct the look, whatever your budget.

DESIGN, ANDREW BROWN INTERIORS, ANDREWBROWNINTERIORS.COM

get the LOOK

The dhurrie rug in the inspiration room is simple yet dynamic thanks to the irregular spacing of its thin stripes, an effect also present in these look-alikes.

RUG

◂ high $349
Flat-woven wool and cotton Ristinge **RUG,** 7′ x 10′, IKEA, ikea.ca.

▸ low $199
Flat-woven cotton End Line **RUG,** 5′ x 8′, CB2, cb2.com.

NIGHTSTAND

◂ high
$1,199
Hammered iron Sinclair **NIGHTSTAND** with oxidized brass and glass shelves, 20″ x 13″ x 25″, Art Shoppe, theartshoppe.com.

▸ low
$499US
Bronzed iron Etagere **NIGHTSTAND** with antiqued mirror shelves, 21″ x 16″ x 35″, Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.

Made of metal and mirror, the low option is an excellent alternative to the vintage original.

ACCESSORIES

◂ high $150
S&C Home Collection polished buffalo horn **OBJET** with wooden stand, 5″ x 18″, Canfloyd, 1-800-263-3551.

▸ low $125US
Ram's horn and brass **CANDLE HOLDER,** 8″ x 7″, Jayson Home, jaysonhome.com.

◂ high $80
Poured Home **CANDLE** in English Pear & Freesia, Jo Malone London, jomalone.ca.

▸ low $39
Voluspa Maison poured **CANDLE** in Gardenia Colonia, Indigo, indigo.ca.

BEDSCAPE

high $645US
Convex silver-leafed glass 1940s Églomisé **MIRROR** with metal frame in Antiqued Brass, 30″, Restoration Hardware, rh.com.

MIRROR

▲ **high** $88
Queen Egyptian cotton satin Tori **PILLOWCASE** in Silver, per pair, Au Lit Fine Linens, aulitfinelinens.com.

▲ **low** $34
Plum & Bow cotton Woodblock Blossom **PILLOWCASE,** per pair, Urban Outfitters, urbanoutfitters.com.

▲ **high** $4,058
Queen leather Alison **BED FRAME** in Sundance Saddle, Ethan Allen, ethanallen.ca.

Save by opting for a headboard in place of a bed frame.

▸ **low** $639
Somette queen polyester St Kitts **HEADBOARD** in Brown, O.co.

▸ **high** $147US
Along the Highway **PRINT** on standard paper with Rich Black Wood frame, 16″ x 20″, Minted, minted.com.

ARTWORK

▲ **low** $140 Matted Crater Lake Oregon **PRINT** with Black Aluminum frame, 16″ x 20″, YellowKorner Art Gallery, yellowkorner.com.

◂ **high** $60
Cotton-backed printed jute Apani **TOSS CUSHION** with feather-blend insert, 18″ x 12″, CB2, cb2.com.

▸ **low** $18
Cotton Lappljung Ruta **TOSS CUSHION COVER,** 16″ x 26″, $13, polyester **INSERT,** $5, IKEA, ikea.ca.

low $192
Urban Trends Collection **MIRROR** with tarnished metal frame, 32″, O.co.

This Ansel Adams nature photograph wows in black and white.

EMBRACE A LIGHT FIXTURE WITH PERSONALITY. THIS CHIC CHANDELIER, FEATURING LEAF-SHAPED ADORNMENTS, LENDS DRAMA AND ILLUMINATES THE SPACE'S MOST COVETED ELEMENT: THE BED.

This elegant master bedroom by Toronto designers Erin Feasby and Cindy Bleeks has us dreaming of restful slumbers and undisturbed mornings. Here's how to bring the look home.

TEXT BRITTANY DEVENYI

PHOTOGRAPHY DONNA GRIFFITH

blissful bedroom

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"Barely Hanging On"

Listening Fail #15
"RCA Jungle"

Listening Fail #09
"Extreme Pairing Fail"

Listening Fail #30
"Cord Nightmare"

Listening Fail #14
"Mug o' Bass"

Listening Fail #02
"MacGyver"

Listening Fail #23
"You've Got the Left,
I've Got the Right"

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▲ Cotton Jellybean **FABRIC** in Beige & Pink, $109 per yard, through designers, Kravet Canada, kravetcanada.com.

Glass Carat **TABLE LAMP** with cotton shade, $269, CB2, cb2.com.

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King linen Chamber **BED FRAME** with wood base, $9,845, Elte, elte.com.

◀ Lacquered wood Mason **NIGHTSTAND,** $479, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

▼ Cotton and wool Diamond **RUG,** 8′ x 10′, $499 US, Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.

▲ Polyester Polo **ARMCHAIR** in Beige with ash legs, $549, Structube, structube.com.

DESIGN, Feasby & Bleeks Design, feasbyandbleeks.com; Gray Mist CC-80 **WALL PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **BED FRAME, NIGHTSTANDS, RUG, CHANDELIER, MIRROR,** Elte; **ARMCHAIR & OTTOMAN,** Cornerstone Home Interiors; **VANITY,** Elte Market; **SIDE TABLE, DUVET COVER,** West Elm; floral **DRAPERY & TOSS CUSHION FABRIC,** Threadcount Textile & Design; **ROMAN BLIND &** geometric coral **TOSS CUSHION FABRIC,** Designer Fabrics; **DRAPERY & ROMAN BLIND SEWING,** Blinds Drapes and Bedding; **BOLSTER CUSHION FABRIC,** Primavera; **TOSS CUSHION & BOLSTER CUSHION SEWING,** Pat Walker; **FLORAL ARRANGEMENT,** Sweetpea's.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

TEXT SARA CATION | **PHOTOGRAPHY** DONNA GRIFFITH | **STYLING** JESSICA WAKS

easy DOES IT

What's better than chic, sophisticated holiday style? The ability to achieve it with ease. Here are 10 tips to simplify your next festive soiree.

1

Last year, when homeowners Pamela Schott and Sheldon Pollack moved into this 7,500-square-foot five-bedroom century home in Toronto's Forest Hill neighbourhood, they merged more than just their families (he has three 30-somethings; she has two kids; and four of the five live at the house part-time). The couple, who will wed next year, also blended their approaches to the holidays. To that end, their seasonal decor is sophisticated and minimalist, glamorous and uncluttered, neither too gimmicky nor too theme-y. For Pamela and Sheldon, it's all about simplicity. Though they enjoy entertaining – the couple loves to host a holiday drop-in – they always keep it effortless. "A party is about the friends, family, wine, appetizers and conversation," says Pamela, who makes creating a relaxed atmosphere her priority. "It's about the event, not the planning." Here, we highlight 10 ways Pamela and Sheldon execute their elegant holiday style with ease.

1. Choose Function

A petite potted rosemary tree gives the kitchen counter holiday flair with purpose. Well into the new year, it will serve as a source of fresh decoration for place settings and garnish for themed cocktails.

2. Make Strategic Splurges

Don't stress about baking in the days leading up to your party. If you lack the time and the piping skills, splurge on artfully adorned cookies iced in your home's colour scheme for a scrumptious statement.

3. Stay Simple

A bouquet of white amaryllis is an understated accent that's synonymous with winter but doesn't scream "holidays." Buy the blooms a few days before your event so they're at their prime when guests arrive.

4. Lay It Down

Getting garlands to swag just right can take a lot of fussing. So if you want to gussy up your windows in a flash, layer cuttings of greenery on your windowsills instead. Here, Douglas fir and magnolia leaves add a luxe touch.

5. Accent the Architecture Draw attention to eye-catching structural features like leaded glass windows with verdant wreaths that accentuate the details but don't steal the show.

6. Make Room for More Use a bowl to hold Christmas baubles that didn't make it onto the tree for a simple centrepiece or coffee table accent.

7. Wrap It Up No pot? No problem! Use a swath of grey linen fabric secured with decorative ribbon to dress up the base of a tabletop tree. This unconventional feature lends a festive touch to an otherwise unadorned space.

8. Come Out From Under the Tree Take your gift-wrapping to the next level with finishing details like sculptural toppers and layered ribbons. Don't just place presents under the tree: Artfully arrange them on various nearby surfaces for vignettes that suit the season.

9. Mix Metallics Sticking to a gold and silver palette makes decorating the tree almost effortless. Look for a mix of shimmering materials, from beading to mercury glass to metallic fabrics, so you don't have to think too hard about even distribution.

10. Make It a Team Effort Whether it's decorating the tree, hanging wreaths or wrapping presents, holiday tasks are more easily executed as a team. Get your tools out ahead of time, gather the family and put on your favourite holiday tunes to set the mood – you'll be done before you can say "cool yule!"

DESIGN, Manor Interior Design, 416-544-1700; **ARCHITECTURE,** BlackLab Architects; **CONTRACTING,** Towerhouse Design + Build; Classic Gray OC-23 **WALL PAINT** (throughout), White Dove OC-17 **FIREPLACE MANTEL & TRIM PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; **GREENERY,** Sheridan Nurseries. **KITCHEN:** Custom **CABINETRY, CABINETRY HARDWARE,** Millworx; porcelain **COUNTERTOPS & BACKSPLASH SLABS,** Marble Plus; **RANGE,** Sub-Zero and Wolf; **RANGE HOOD INSERT,** Sirius; **FAUCET,** Taps Bath Centre; custom **STOOLS, PENDANT LIGHTS,** Manor Interior Design; **CAKE STAND,** William Ashley China; **TRAY** (holding cookies), **BOWL** (holding nuts), Elte. **KITCHEN NOOK: CLUB CHAIRS,** mirrored **SIDE TABLE,** Manor Interior Design; **THROW,** Elte; star **GARLAND,** West Elm; mini **ORNAMENTS,** Restoration Hardware. **LIVING ROOM: SOFA,** Art Shoppe; **ARMCHAIRS, COFFEE TABLE, RUG, LUMBAR CUSHION, BOWL,** Elte; **TABLE LAMPS,** custom Greek key **TOSS CUSHIONS,** Manor Interior Design; large **TOSS CUSHION,** Elte; **GIFT WRAP,** Paper E. Clips; select **ORNAMENTS,** West Elm.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

tropic WONDER

TEXT ERYN CHESNEY

PHOTOGRAPHY
STACEY BRANDFORD

STYLING
ANN MARIE FAVOT &
MORGAN LINDSAY

How to take traditional holiday style and reinvent the decorative wheel for a party setting that pays tribute to the tropics.

1. Make a Splash

Stir things up at your holiday party by serving a signature drink that speaks to your unique decorating theme. Not only will it help bring a little pizzazz to your bar cart, but the attention to detail is sure to impress guests.

1

Classic architecture and contemporary furnishings may not sound like soulmates, but they're a match made in heaven in Julia Williamson and Eric Nuttall's 5,400-square-foot home, located in Toronto's Lytton Park neighbourhood. Designer Jennifer Reid's blend of styles provides the perfect backdrop for the daring infusion of colourful modern elements that reflect the homeowners' fun lifestyle.

When it comes to Christmas, the couple, along with their two-year-old son, Jackson (pictured on the following page), loves nothing more than decorating their home and spending quality time with family and friends.

And while some would see their fresh interior as befitting a traditional holiday aesthetic, the fearless couple has no problem making an unexpected statement instead. The home's vibrant textiles and clean-lined silhouettes perfectly complement a more eclectic (read: tropical) approach to celebrating the season.

Here's how you can follow suit and embrace the unconventional for your next festive party. Once you witness your guests' reactions, you won't look back!

2. Think Beyond Red & Green

Not every interior suits the typical holiday palette. Instead of fighting your home's existing colour scheme, run with it. Here, statement-making dining chairs backed with lush turquoise velvet anchor the fresh table setting, which includes matching glasses and a bold botanical table runner (it's actually a strip of graphic wallpaper!).

3. Go South

In lieu of evergreen sprigs, establish a more international flavour for your tablescape with natural elements like tropical fruit. Fragrant satsuma tangerines, their stems and leaves left on, add a hit of colour and greenery to each plate while eschewing the expected holiday decor.

5

4. Use Flower Power

The flowers that take centre stage on your dining table should be an expression of you, not just the season. Whether it's hydrangeas, tulips or calla lilies that give you joy, create true-to-you arrangements for a one-of-a-kind scheme. In the dining room, unexpected bouquets of fiery orange garden roses with sprigs of seasonal berries give off a festive feel while still complementing the room's contemporary finishes. What's more, you'll love looking at them long after the party ends.

5. Pace Yourself

Your Christmas party doesn't necessarily need a big dolled-up evergreen. A unique interior makes enough of a statement on its own, so try not to go over the top with the details. A few eclectic ornaments are more than enough.

Try not to go over the top WITH THE DETAILS. *A few eclectic ornaments are* MORE THAN ENOUGH.

6. Let It All Hang Out

You may have to get creative with your decorative accents to achieve your novel style. Try swagging lengths of ribbon between groupings of baubles on your fireplace mantel to echo a traditional garland and underscore your seasonal scheme.

7. Keep It Simple

Less decoration means more room for mingling (and dancing!). The living room's year-round palette was easily enhanced for the season with the addition of a few wrapped gifts, some strategically hung ribbon and sweet arrangements of flowers and fruit.

DESIGN, Barlow Reid Design, barlowreid.com; **CONTRACTING,** Douglas Reid Renovations. **LIVING ROOM:** Gray Owl OC-52 **WALL PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **SOFA,** Montauk Sofa; **ARMCHAIR** (customized), Modern Furniture Knockoff; **COFFEE TABLE, RUG, MIRROR,** nailhead-trimmmed **OTTOMANS,** blue **TOSS CUSHION,** white **BOX,** Elte; custom **DRAPERY,** cusom coral **TOSS CUSHIONS,** custom **LUMBAR CUSHION,** Fine Interiors by Susan; *Wanting You* **ARTWORK** by Joshua Jensen-Nagle, Bau-Xi Gallery; **TABLE LAMP,** AllModern.com; faux **CHRISTMAS TREE,** Canadian Tire; **RIBBON,** Mokuba; seahorse **ORNAMENT,** Putti Fine Furnishings. **DINING ROOM: WALLPAPER,** Crown Wallpaper & Fabrics; **DINING CHAIR FABRIC,** Kravet Canada; **DINING CHAIR FABRICATION,** Silva Custom Furniture; custom **DRAPERY,** Fine Interiors by Susan; **RUG, BAR CART,** Elte; **CHANDELIER,** Zaneen; **WALLPAPER** (used as table runner), Bilbrough & Co.; **PUNCH BOWL, GLASSES** (on bar cart), Crate and Barrel; **CANDELABRA, CANDLE HOLDERS,** pink **SIDE PLATES, FLATWARE,** CB2.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

TEXT MARY LEVITSKI | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ASHLEY CAPP | **STYLING** CHRISTINE DOVEY

FABLED FESTIVE

Blogger and stylist Christine Dovey plays fairy godmother and transforms a young family's home into an enchanted forest for Christmas.

FURRY TALE

At once posh and pastoral, faux fur elements, such as the stockings adorning the living room fireplace mantel, help establish the winter wonderland feel stylist Christine Dovey was after.

DESIGN, Stacy McLennan Interiors, stacyminteriors.com; **CONTRACTING,** PCM Project and Construction Management; **STOCKINGS,** Canadian Tire; **GREENERY** (throughout), select **FLORALS** (throughout), Fiori Oakville; select faux **FLORALS** (throughout), Michaels.

MAGIC MOMENTS

The serene sitting room is a quiet refuge for anyone who needs a little me time – key when the whole gang is around for the holidays. Christine respected the space's intended purpose and kept adornments hushed.

Oxford White CC-30 **WALL PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; **FLOORING** (throughout), ProSource; custom **DESK,** Pine on Bloor; **DESK CHAIR,** West Elm; **LANTERNS** (on floor), Canadian Tire.

FORTUITOUS FINDS

A fresh theme need not mean all new ornaments. Ideal additions like this cotton wreath and the tree stumps in the living room came from the homeowners' existing collection.

ARMCHAIRS, Silva Custom Furniture; nesting **SIDE TABLES,** Snob; **RUG,** lavender **TOSS CUSHIONS** (throughout), Elte; **TABLE LAMP,** Bellacor; **RIBBON** (throughout), Mokuba.

LUXE LIGHT

The fairy-tale concept called for razzle-dazzle, but this veteran stylist was sure to keep it minimal, balancing glitz with rusticity. "I didn't want to create anything too glamorous or contrived," she explains. A plain kraft paper-wrapped gift adorned with a sumptuous satin ribbon is case in point.

Dressed top to bottom in timeless black, white and wood courtesy of designer Stacy McLennan, this stylishly transitional 8,500-square-foot new build in Oakville, Ont., is the stuff of fairy tales. In fact, the young family of six that resides here spends the holidays in a series of picture-perfect moments: baking together in the spacious kitchen, sharing a meal in the eat-in area and huddled close on the custom U-shaped sofa to watch a festive flick in front of a roaring fire. It's only natural, then, that when blogger and stylist Christine Dovey stepped in to decorate the house for Christmas, she had visions of an enchanted forest. "I wanted to create a natural, warm atmosphere infused with whimsy," she says. The resulting woodsy wonderland is as fanciful as it is rustic and, though wholly unconventional, it represents the coziness and magic of the season.

CHRISTINE DOVEY'S RECIPE for the *Perfect Tree*

STEP ONE
Start with a foundation of lights – as many as you can pack on the tree.

STEP TWO
Hang base pieces, such as metallic baubles and burlap ribbon.

STEP THREE
Introduce ornaments in your accent colour of choice.

STEP FOUR
Layer on new unique finds or ornaments with special meaning. (The aim is to create the impression of items collected over time.)

STEP FIVE
Fill gaps using natural elements like pinecones to keep the tree from feeling too glitzy.

SECTIONAL, Silva Custom Furniture; faux **CHRISTMAS TREE,** Canadian Tire.

"To me, a *perfect tree* is one that is *filled to the brim* with little treasures."

COMPLEMENTARY CUE

With four kids aged six to 11, these homeowners' chic kitchen sees tons of cheerful commotion, so simple greenery was sufficient to signal the enchanted forest motif.

Custom **CABINETRY,** PM Fine Cabinetry; Oxford White CC-30 **CABINETRY PAINT,** Iron Mountain 2134-30 **ACCENT CABINETRY & ISLAND BASE PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **COUNTERTOPS,** Caesarstone Canada; vinyl-upholstered **STOOLS,** Silva Custom Furniture; **PENDANT LIGHTS,** Union Lighting and Furnishings; trough **BOWL,** white & black **BOWLS,** black **CANDLESTICKS,** Elte.

FLORAL FICTION

Instead of struggling within the confines of seasonal greenery, Christine let her mind wander. "I thought of flowers you might see in a field or in the wild, like wisteria and lavender," says the stylist, who brought vision to reality with the help of both real and faux blooms.

SIMPLY SCRUMPTIOUS

Though it looks like a homemade treat, the roughly iced cake is actually "a store-bought beauty I simplified by removing most of the icing and layering on a few flowers," says Christine.

CAKE STAND, Elte.

SWEET SPREAD

The eat-in area's table (made by one of the homeowners' brothers) is spacious, and the banquette is built for huddling upon – a good thing, because the offerings are sure to entice drop-in guests. Far from a decadent Hansel and Gretel-worthy display, the spread is delightfully light: Fruity soda in a dreamy on-theme lavender shade accompanies vanilla cake.

Iron Mountain 2134-30 **DINING TABLE PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **BANQUETTE FABRICATION,** PM Fine Cabinetry; **BANQUETTE FABRIC,** Robert Allen; **BANQUETTE UPHOLSTERY,** Silva Custom Furniture; Tolix **DINING CHAIRS,** Design Within Reach; **PENDANT LIGHT,** Union Lighting and Furnishings.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

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HOLIDAYS *by hand*

Sweet and simple homemade touches are the perfect additions to a rustic Christmas setting.

TEXT ERYN CHESNEY

PHOTOGRAPHY JANIS NICOLAY

CHERYL KRECSY, the creative owner of Little White House & Co. lifestyle boutiques and cafés in Fort Langley and Abbotsford, B.C., isn't the type of person who pulls out the same old holiday decorations year after year. By sticking to muted colour palettes, reusing vintage finds and taking a totally DIY approach to the season, she's perfected the art of reinvention. Here, we share her how-tos for eight stunning yet simple crafts that are sure to make this Christmas one for the ages.

1. LOVELY LAYERS

Think outside the box and let your gifts act as rustic show-pieces by wrapping them in perfectly imperfect layers. This token features a sweet heart cut out of burlap and a stamped kraft tag affixed with a vintage clothes peg.

2. PRECIOUS GREETING

Handcrafted cards hold much more meaning than anything you can buy. Dress up white notepaper with a small twig of boxwood made into a dainty wreath, and write a personal holiday message inside. The bespoke card is both understated and elegant.

3. STRING ALONG

Basic materials like twine and tulle look elegant when fashioned into a garland. Simply tie small pieces of white tulle onto twine and open the ends to look like bows, then wrap it around a tree or hang it on a mantel.

4. TAKE NOTE

Kraft gift tags are the perfect places to display your own festive greetings. Whether you stamp, write or paint them, these lovely labels are ideal for either hanging on your tree or topping a pile of wrapped presents that await eager family and friends.

5. HUNG WITH CARE

Repurpose your grandmother's doilies by folding them over a piece of twine and hanging it in your window. In the sunshine, they resemble dainty falling snowflakes.

6. SOMETHING OLD

Instead of buying new wrapping paper every year, try using old scraps to cover your gifts. To fashion this vintage-style rose topper, cut five curvy-edged circles, each slightly smaller than the last, then crinkle them up and glue them together.

7. KEY ELEMENTS

Create your own ornaments with everyday objects. Tied with a piece of frayed linen, an old key goes from practical to cherished. You can gather finds throughout the year at vintage markets, antiques shops, thrift stores and the like.

8. IVY LEAGUE

Show off your DIY prowess by garnishing presents with sweet mini vine wreaths. A plain box with a stamped initial is all that's needed underneath to make your handiwork shine.

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BRANCH *out*

1

Don't have the room to erect a full-sized fir or cedar? Don't fret! We've got five stylish DIY tree alternatives that can fit into the tiniest of spaces.

TEXT MARY LEVITSKI

PHOTOGRAPHY, LIVING4MEDIA/GRÄFE & UNZER VERLAG/ANKE SCHÜTZ

1. HANG OUT

Fashion several spare wire hangers into a diamond-shaped mobile and hang the result on a wall. Jazz it up with a bunch of colourful baubles strung on ribbon, slightly varying the lengths for an organic feel. As a striking topper, tack on a sparkly snowflake ornament.

2. ROLL WITH IT

Utilize all the extra gift wrap lying around by forming it into a wall-hung tree. Start with the longest roll at the bottom and work your way up to the shortest (you'll need to trim them as you work toward the top). To finish it off, add a base and topper cut from your favourite paper.

3. TWIST TRADITION

Use a free knob to display a makeshift mini evergreen. A wire coat hanger is easy to bend into submission, especially if you first create a paper template to follow.

4. WOOL THE WALL

Source festive red yarn and trace a basic tree shape (the bigger, the better), securing it to a wall with pins and tape. You can affix an ornament here and there, but keep in mind: Less is more for this high-impact look.

5. PILE HIGH

Instead of worrying about getting an evergreen for displaying presents beneath, strategically stack wrapped gifts to construct a tree-like form. Add a few ornaments so your faux plant is decorated as well as dainty.

PHOTOGRAPHY, LIVING4MEDIA/GREAT STOCK!, LIVING4MEDIA/ACHIM SASS, LIVING4MEDIA/ANDREAS HOERNISCH, LIVING4MEDIA/ACHIM SASS

deck THE HALLS

TEXT BRITTANY DEVENYI

1. *simple style* When dressing up a stately staircase for the holidays, less is always more. Here, modest adornments like an evergreen garland and quilted stockings catch the eye and also enhance intricate designer details, such as the entryway's elaborate wall panelling.

Want your home to make a dashing first impression this season? Seek style inspiration from these festive staircase displays.

PHOTOGRAPHY, DONNA GRIFFITH; DESIGN, MANOR INTERIOR DESIGN, 416-544-1700; BENCH, RUNNER, ELTE, ELTE.COM; GARLAND, SHERIDAN NURSERIES, SHERIDANNURSERIES.COM; STOCKINGS, POTTERY BARN, POTTERYBARN.COM; GIFT WRAP, RIBBON, CREATIVE BAG, CREATIVEBAG.COM

3. bauble bar Banish the idea that ornaments are best suited for the Christmas tree by using them to beautify your banister, too. This glistening garland of metallic baubles lends festive sparkle to the foyer and echoes the gold tones in the wallcovering and armchair.

2. mixed materials Fact: The holidays are just as much about flexing your creative muscles as they are about baking gingerbread. Make your simple entryway shine by fashioning a felt ball garland to drape along your staircase. For extra whimsy, attach glass ornaments with ribbon.

PHOTOGRAPHY, DONNA GRIFFITH, VIRGINIA MACDONALD

4. gilded glamour

'Tis the time to embrace all that's glittery and gold. Take inspiration from this elegant staircase set-up and bedeck your banister with a beaded garland accented with shimmery balls and gilded leaves. The space's blue and gold palette puts a twist on tradition, highlighting the glamorous side of the season.

Step up your staircase game this Christmas by **STYLING A STUNNING VIGNETTE** beside the banister. Here, a tiny faux tree set in a gold ice bucket, a luxe sheepskin and a grouping of glitzy gifts add grace and festive flair.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIRGINIA MACDONALD

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Unpack your vintage baubles and beaded garlands and get inspired by these magnificently decorated trees that flaunt timeless holiday style.

TEXT BRITTANY DEVENYI

1

1. NATURAL CHOICE

Too often is a tree overshadowed by showy trinkets and an eruption of tinsel. We love how this grand evergreen shows off its natural side with nothing more than pinecone ornaments and twinkle lights.

PHOTOGRAPHY, JEAN LONGPRÉ

A DRESSED UP CHRISTMAS TREE IS AN *age-old holiday standard:* ALWAYS CELEBRATED AND FOREVER IN STYLE.

2. BLOOMING BEAUTY

Small but mighty: This tiny tree, trimmed with oversized white and cream faux flowers, is a total showstopper. Its pared-back palette and petite frame make it the perfect fit for any space.

3. SHIMMERY WONDER

An evergreen dressed in elegant shades of silver and white is already a stunning sight, but when its topper is crafted from extra baubles, ribbon and feathery branches, it's transformed into a merry miracle.

4. ROYAL SPECTACLE

There's something stately and serene about a blue and white festive scheme. The look is a subtle twist on tradition that still has timeless appeal – and it's even better when the tree's decor matches the home's.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIRGINIA MACDONALD, MONIC RICHARD, MICHAEL GRAYDON

5. POLISHED PINE

Garnished with an array of pretty pinecone embellishments, this evergreen pays homage to the frost-covered forest it came from. The shape of the ornaments lends cohesion, while their varied sizes and hues add allure.

5

PHOTOGRAPHY: VIRGINIA MACDONALD

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8

6. ELEGANT EYEFUL

Metallics are always a good idea at this time of year, and this stunningly decorated specimen is all the proof we need. When using this shimmery palette, the more twinkle lights you add, the better; they'll play off the sheen of the baubles and garlands.

7. FROSTY SIGHT

Draw inspiration from the wintry weather (it's not all bad!) by trimming your tree with glass icicle-shaped ornaments. The delicate decorations are all the more welcome when there's a fireplace in the same room providing complementary warmth.

8. SCANDI TREASURE

A minimalist aesthetic coupled with charming homespun touches (read: handmade felt ornaments and garlands) amounts to Norwegian-style chic.

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9. RADIANT CLASSIC

When all is said and done, you can't go wrong with the traditional Christmas palette of red, green and white. A fir jazzed up with whimsical nature-inspired adornments elevates this room's cozy, homey vibe.

PHOTOGRAPHY, DONNA GRIFFITH

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Cabin chic is dressed up for the holidays with hits of red in dishware, napkins, berries and flowers. Homemade pie is the, er, icing on the cake.

IN GOOD TASTE

Be inspired by a whole world of Christmas looks with our globally influenced holiday tablescapes.

TEXT SUZANNE MOUTIS

PHOTOGRAPHY ROBIN STUBBERT

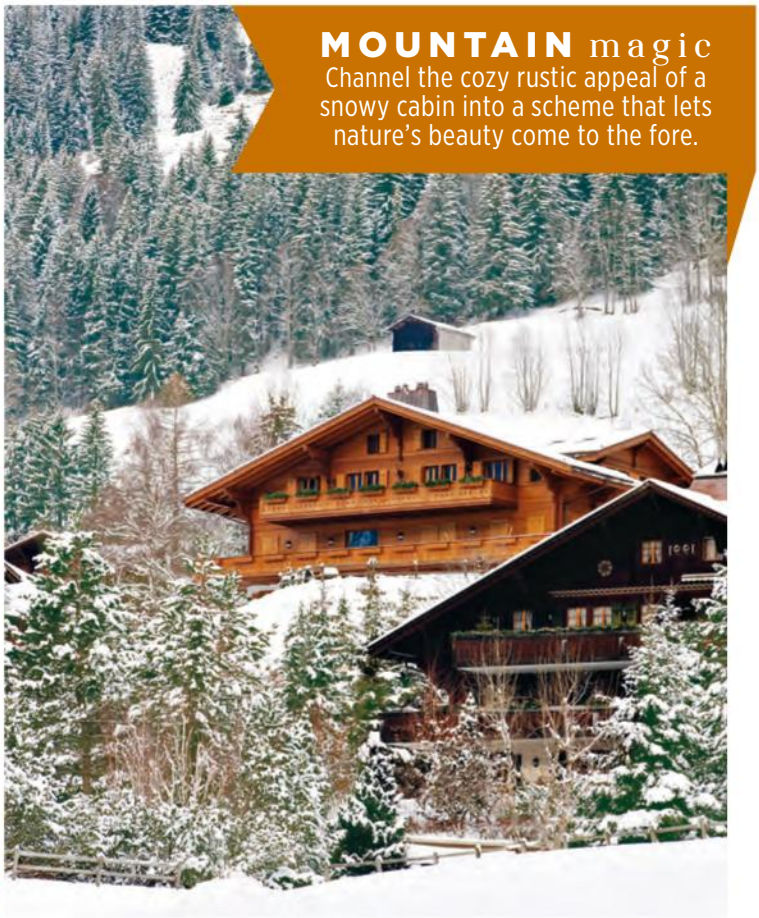
Forest friends and birch logs grace this chalet-inspired table. Lots of glassware and tea lights add sparkle.

Wood tones are balanced with patterns that bring to mind ski sweaters and folk tales.

Cinnamon sticks and evergreen sprigs make for a simple scented place marker that suits the decor.

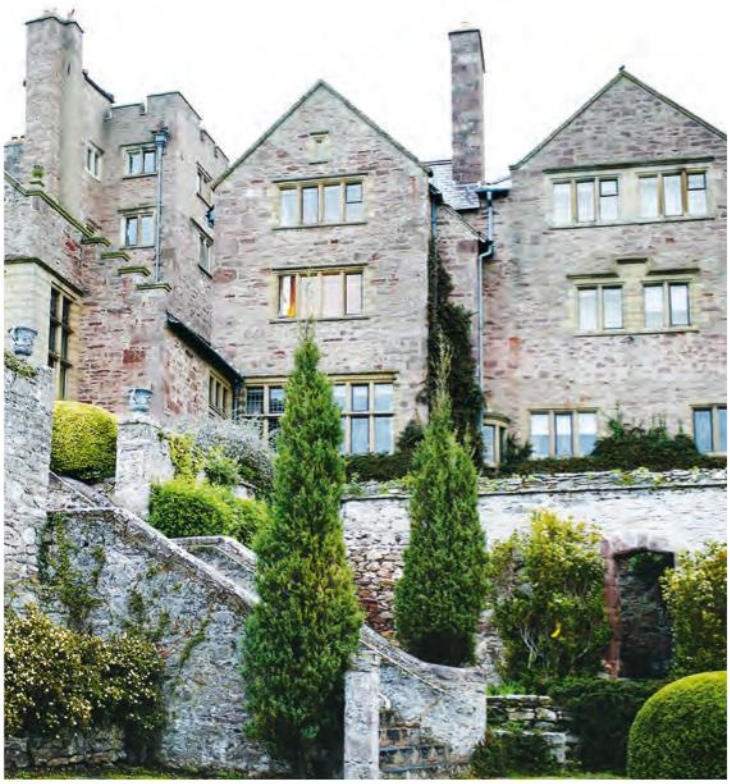
MOUNTAIN magic

Channel the cozy rustic appeal of a snowy cabin into a scheme that lets nature's beauty come to the fore.



PHOTOGRAPHY, DONNA GRIFFITH, STACEY BRANDFORD, LIVING4MEDIA/ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL, ROBIN STUBBERT, LIVING4MEDIA/PETER RAIDER

Grey, greige and pewter make merry in this decorous table setting. Chunky pressed glass and silvery greens complement the neutral palette.



COUNTRY elegance

Go for the formal refinement of a stately home in a scene filled with pale neutrals and lots of patina.

A loosely tied sprig of rosemary nestled on a pewter plate sweetly marks each diner's place.

Luminous creamy pink roses add softness and harmony to a traditional environment.

PHOTOGRAPHY, MAYA VISNYEI, STACEY VAN BERKEL, MAYA VISNYEI(2), STACEY VAN BERKEL

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FRAGRANCE *blossoms*
with every TOUCH

touch-activated freshness *by* DOWNY INFUSIONS

Take your holiday decorating cues from **PALETTES THAT REFLECT FAMILIAR LANDSCAPES** *all over the world.*

Artfully integrated, black, gold and white combine drama and glitz to create a luxe cosmopolitan aesthetic.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JANIS NICOLAY

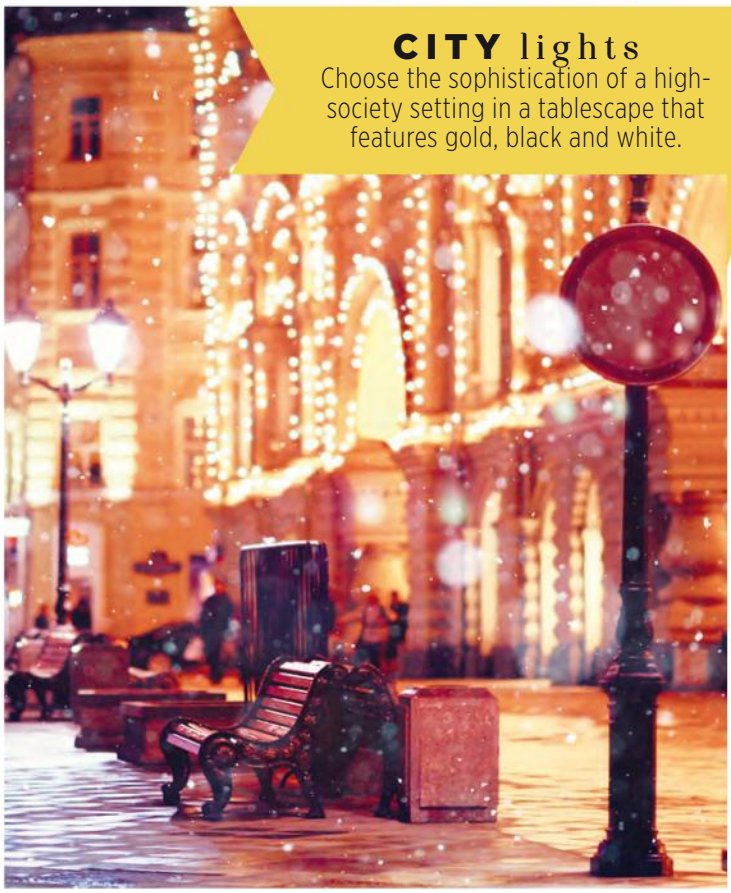
A variety of gold tones impart texture and, when coupled with white, keep the look from being too brash.

Black and white stripes are a classic foil to the sheen of gold. A vintage-look napkin ring adds an old-world feel.

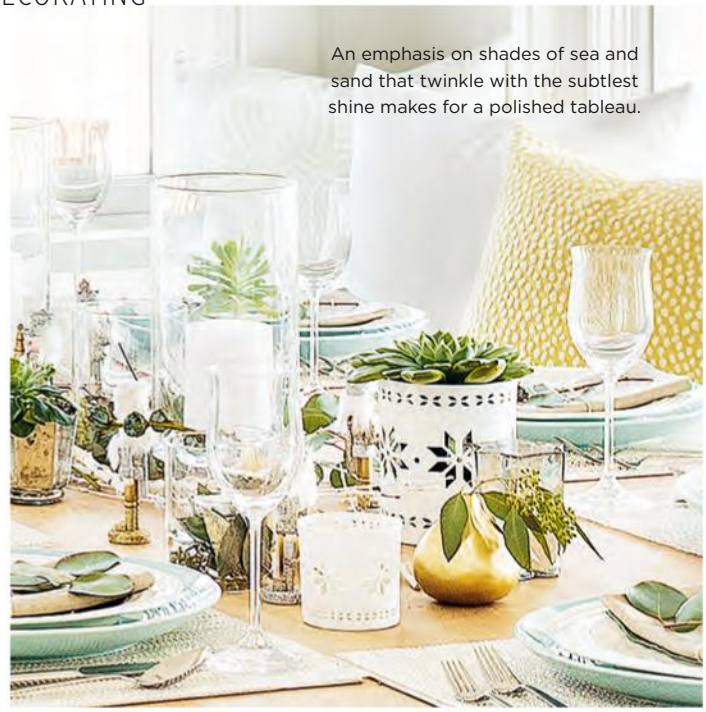
Pretty gold ornaments tied onto a crisp linen napkin make an effortlessly lovely arrangement.

CITY lights

Choose the sophistication of a high-society setting in a tablescape that features gold, black and white.



PHOTOGRAPHY, VIRGINIA MACDONALD, DONNA GRIFFITH, KICHIGIN/SHUTTERSTOCK, VIRGINIA MACDONALD, KICHIGIN/SHUTTERSTOCK



An emphasis on shades of sea and sand that twinkle with the subtlest shine makes for a polished tableau.

SEASIDE shimmer

Opt for the fresh feel of a coastal retreat by creating an atmosphere that entices with delicate metallics and watery hues.

Airy aqua, warm gold and off-white mingle happily with delicate glassware and table accents.

Simple linens layered with nature-inspired elements are cheerful alternatives to the standard ornaments and ribbons.

PHOTOGRAPHY, BARRY CALHOUN, STACEY VAN BERKEL, VIRGINIA MACDONALD(2), STACEY VAN BERKEL

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DECEMBER 2016

PHOTOGRAPHY, BRITTANY MAHOOD

DARE TO BE DECADENT

As the holidays draw near, hushing the hustle and bustle of your everyday routine, take time to indulge. Set a table that's as rich and satisfying as your menu, settle in and luxuriate in some quality time with loved ones.

DREAMING OF A *White & Gold* CHRISTMAS

Designer Stephanie Giesbrecht welcomes the season in this B.C. home with glitzy gestures, natural accents and a perfectly pared-down palette that feels as fresh as a winter snowfall.

TEXT IRIS BENAROIA | **PHOTOGRAPHY** JANIS NICOLAY

Presents? You shouldn't have! These gifts look almost too pretty to open. A sprig of pine adorning one package reinforces the home's natural scheme. "Colourful wrapping would have felt out of place in this setting," says homeowner Danielle Hardy.

DESIGN, Stephanie Jean Design, stephaniejeandesign.com; **CONTRACTING,** Rodell Developments; White Dove OC-17 **WALL PAINT** (throughout), Benjamin Moore; **FLOORING** (throughout), West Edge Flooring.

"Danielle and I didn't want the tree to look too pristine and perfectly thought out," says designer Stephanie Giesbrecht, who happily confesses that she's not an over-decorator. Mini lights and larger frosted vintage-style globe bulbs add layers, interest and sparkle.

WREATH, Floralista Flower Studio.

This delightful kitchen is the family's favourite hangout. Can you blame them? The wooden table is warm and welcoming (a slick white version would have made the room feel too cold). A door to the right leads to the pantry and is covered with a chalkboard decal for family reminders and holiday greetings.

DINING TABLE, Restoration Hardware; **DINING CHAIRS,** O.co; **LIGHT FIXTURE,** Aidan Gray; Moonshine 2140-60 **KITCHEN CABINETRY PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **BACKSPLASH TILE,** Tile Town; **REFRIGERATOR, RANGE,** Coast Wholesale Appliances; **FAUCET,** Delta Faucet; **CABINETRY HARDWARE,** MyKnobs.com; chalkboard **DOOR DECAL,** UrbanWalls.

OPPOSITE Danielle and her three-year-old daughter, Isla, enjoy a sweet moment on the feather-filled sofa, which is extra deep for max coziness. "It's upholstered in outdoor-friendly fabric so it's easy to clean, which is great for a young family," says Danielle.

Sure, you can make like Will Ferrell in the comedy film *Elf* and deploy enough doodads to turn your home into a believable Santa's workshop. Or you can do the opposite and take a restrained approach to Christmas, just like designer Stephanie Giesbrecht does. "I personally like it when holiday decorations go with your home," says Stephanie, who runs Stephanie Jean Design in Langley, B.C., and insists seasonal styling "should flow with everyday living."

That's certainly the case in Danielle Hardy's home. Even the gingerbread house, where there's nary a flashy gumdrop in sight, and the glistening plate of glazed sour cream donuts match the monochromatic decor. The 3,000-square-foot Surrey, B.C., abode Danielle shares with her husband, Paul, and their kids, Mattias, 9, Maxim, 7, and Isla, 3, is a stunningly muted yet spirited space year-round.

No strangers to the decor world themselves (the couple owns and operates the online decal shop UrbanWalls), Danielle and Paul knew exactly which style they were looking for when they moved into the house two years ago, and they enlisted Stephanie to execute it. "We love Stephanie's aesthetic," says Danielle. "That light Scandinavian look is so easy to live with."

The decade-old house boasted a nice open-concept layout but desperately needed a cosmetic overhaul. So Stephanie revived the dated brown walls and cherrywood-stained kitchen cabinetry with paint – soothing white for the walls and a splash of light grey for the cabinets – and amplified the luxe look with a hexagonal marble backsplash, white quartz countertops, gleaming hardware and brass light fixtures.

She also revamped the living room, customizing the unfinished fireplace with a shelving unit to stash bits and bobs and keep things clutter-free. The result is a house composed of chic, kick-up-your-feet rooms in white with small doses of grey,

glammy gold and, that grounding staple, black. "The look is classic yet modern, but not trendy," says Stephanie. "So the Hardys won't tire of it."

With a palette that recalls marshmallows, meringue and pristine snowy fields, this interior is the ideal backdrop for Stephanie's holiday decor style. "We didn't want it to look stereotypical, so we banished the bright reds," says Danielle, who loved Stephanie's original design so much she hired her for the seasonal decorating.

Stephanie layered in earthy seasonal elements with subtle festive spirit. Rather than weighing down the Christmas tree with a glut of ornaments, for instance, she employed two styles of string lights (one bearing big bulbs and the other bearing small ones) for spare but brightly lit branches that quietly dazzle. Elsewhere, snippets of nature – like the grand garland draped over a mantel – look like they've been foraged from the forest.

Danielle is thrilled with the subtle seasonal makeover, which serves as proof that over-the-top Christmas decor (à la Buddy the elf) doesn't define holiday style, and that opting for a pared-back approach certainly doesn't make you a grinch.

TOP LEFT & RIGHT Tangerines in a flower-shaped bowl deliver a small dose of colour that doesn't overwhelm. An array of irresistible sweets displayed on milk glass cake stands and white dishware matches the house's monochromic motif.

LEFT Mattias (left) and Maxim play a round of Jenga, a game that the whole family, young and old, can enjoy!

ABOVE Danielle is drawn to gift wrap with minimal modern prints because it speaks to her background in graphic design.

OPPOSITE Sometimes the nicest countertop displays are the simplest. Here, treats set on staggered cake stands offer edible eye candy next to a tray of refreshments.

STOOLS, O.Co; **PENDANT LIGHTS,** West Elm; **RUG,** HomeSense.

Isla's white play kitchen is as chic as her parents' (even without the quartz countertops and marble-tiled backsplash). The removable noel decal can be switched out when the season is over. The wee Charlie Brown-esque tree is adorned with whimsical ornaments that represent the treats that a little girl's daydreams are made of: donuts, ice cream and cake.

Noel **WALL DECAL,** UrbanWalls; **MINI TREE,** Floralista Flower Studios; **PLAY KITCHEN,** Amazon.ca.

STEPHANIE GIESBRECHT'S *Serene Christmas* MUST-HAVES

1. NATURAL GREENERY

I love using wreaths, garlands and vases of greenery like cedar and eucalyptus throughout the home. They look great and offer amazing scents.

2. LOTS OF CANDLES

Whether lined up along your dining and coffee tables, placed in lanterns by the fireplace or even tucked into small votives beside the kitchen sink, candles always add a welcoming cozy glow.

3. AMPLE RIBBON

Stock up on a variety of ribbons to finish gifts, embellish wreaths, tie onto garlands and incorporate into your Christmas tree decor.

4. WHITE LIGHTS

Whether used on the interior or exterior, white lights are my favourite. I especially love all the classic vintage-looking bulbs available.

5. EXTERIOR PLANTERS

Carry your Christmas decor outside by filling empty urns with pine and cedar boughs.

6. GLASS CLOCHES

Highlight a special ornament or even a sweet gingerbread house by placing it in a bell jar.

7. PLANTED PAPERWHITES

I love fresh flowers, and having a bowl of potted paperwhites is an inexpensive way to keep live blooms around throughout the season.

8. PRETTY PLATTERS

Have trays on hand so you're ready to entertain at a moment's notice.

The niche above the living room's fireplace mantel serves as a spot for leaning lighthearted artwork, which shows off Stephanie's relaxed design approach.

Custom **BUILT-INS,** Rodell Developments; **BUILT-INS HARDWARE,** MyKnobs.com; Simply White OC-117 **BUILT-INS PAINT,** Benjamin Moore; **SOFA, MIRROR,** Restoration Hardware; **COFFEE TABLE,** Renaissance Home; **SIDE TABLE,** round **TOSS CUSHION,** Urban Outfitters; **FIREPLACE SURROUND TILE,** The Home Depot; *In Motion VIII* **ARTWORK** by Miriam Aroeste, **PRINTS,** triangle-print **LUMBAR CUSHION,** The Cross Decor & Design; **RUG,** HomeSense; **TABLE LAMP,** Horchow; white **TOSS CUSHION,** IKEA; white **STOCKING,** Pottery Barn; **STOCKINGS** with snowflakes, West Elm; **GARLAND,** Floralista Flower Studio.

FOR SOURCES, SEE OUR WORKBOOK

Winnipeg-based stylist Danielle Cyr of Mûr joined forces with florist friend Heather Page and other local talents to create two totally different holiday tablescapes. The first is dark, moody and decadent, set for post-supper indulging; the second is white and brimming with light, offering morning munchies. Though the looks are the antithesis of each other in many ways, they both have vintage finds and whimsical ideas as their cornerstones. So will you embrace the dark side or go toward the light? Here, we break each table setting down to help you decide.

1 dark & decadent

With mulled wine, rich cake and plenty of nuts on the menu, this after-dinner tablescape is not for the calorie-counting set. A wide more-is-more floral centrepiece of pastel-hued flowers, varied greenery and even seasonal fruit signals the sinful spread.

TABLETOP TOSS-UP

light vs. dark

2 *white & bright*

Plenty of negative space nods to the tastefully restrained breakfast offerings of croissants, biscotti, jams and berries. Touches of festive green and vintage brassware ground the look and invite investigation.

PRODUCERS DANIELLE CYR & HEATHER PAGE

TEXT MARY LEVITSKI | **PHOTOGRAPHY** BRITTANY MAHOOD

CLOSE-UP • WHITE & BRIGHT 2

PLATES, IKEA; marble **BOWL** (holding berries), Indigo; **BISCOTTI,** KaylaMilligan; **CALLIGRAPHY,** Julie Doan.

by the horns

Collected at antiques shops and flea markets, mini hunting horns served as the jumping-off point for this look and make for unexpected whimsical embellishments atop the pretty calligraphed place cards.

hue cues

Beautifully dotted with dried cranberries and pistachios, biscotti incorporate those telltale jolly tones in a subtle way that befits the pared-back table.

holly moly

Sometimes less really is more. It's amazing what holly – even just a few sprigs strewn across the table – can do to bring on festive cheer.

berry beautiful

Capitalizing on the visual punch of black on white, stylist Danielle Cyr displayed blackberries simply in a small white marble bowl.

plain pleasures

Laid out on a vintage scalloped platter boasting a pretty vine motif, the croissants are ready for jam, whichever flavour guests choose.

midas touch

Jam selections and water are served in utilitarian glassware, but the presentation gets a dose of warmth from vintage brass candlesticks.

curtain call

A backdrop of black velvet drapery panels sets the scene, drawing in guests with an enveloping feeling. To keep the effect cozy, Danielle tempered the drama with time-worn wooden furniture and patinated vintage accessories.

PLATES, IKEA; wooden **CAKE STAND,** Mür; **FLORAL ARRANGEMENT,** Heather Page; **CAKE,** KaylaMilligan.

stylish spirits

Cut glass stemware lends an air of opulence. To further the indulgent theme, a few wineglasses are prefilled and arranged on an antique silver tray.

black magic

Set in a dark marble candlestick, the black taper all but disappears in the dim space, causing its mood-making flame to seemingly float in mid-air.

rustic treasure

The Christmas crackers – made from cardboard rolls and lengths of taupe linen by Kyla Ferguson of TheFlower-Cult – are a homey juxtaposition to the sleek matte black plates.

seasonal signals

Nestled among roses and other flowers, fruits du jour, such as Bosc pears, are hearty reminders of the season.

crowning glory

Danielle took the cake – elegantly iced with a ribbed effect – up a festive notch by adding a curved sprig of rosemary (which resembles fir) at its base.

1. Hocus Focus

An ornate brass mirror and sconces establish quiet old-world elegance in the taproom of The Little Inn of Bayfield in Ontario. The marble fireplace is a natural focal point and the perfect place to anchor the room's festive flair – which needs nothing more than simple greenery.

DESIGN, Cynthia Weber Design, cynthiaweber.com; **CONTRACTING,** Langendoen Custom Building; Beauti-Tone Style at Home Country Colour Collection 2 Junction FD092-4 **MILLWORK PAINT,** Home Hardware; **GARLANDS & MINI TREES** (throughout), Sheridan Nurseries; **WREATHS** (throughout), Hofland.

A historic inn in Bayfield, Ont., gets styled for the holidays with natural rustic touches that are in keeping with the region's past.

TEXT KATHLEEN DORE | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ROBIN STUBBERT
STYLING ANN MARIE FAVOT

HERITAGE *holiday*

THE VILLAGE OF BAYFIELD, ONT., situated on the shore of Lake Huron, appears preserved in time. It's a destination for many, but stumble upon it unawares and you'll feel like you've time travelled to pioneer days.

That was exactly what led Joanne Oliver to purchase and restore The Little Inn of Bayfield, a historic hotel in the centre of town. "The fact that it has been operating continuously since it was built in the mid-1800s as a coaching stop is such a wonderfully charming story, I couldn't help but fall in love with the place," she says.

Joanne hired local decorator Cynthia Weber, who had also fallen under the inn's spell long ago, to gently restore the heritage building. "My husband and I have a history at the inn – we had stayed there over the years – so I had a few things in mind that I felt would enhance it," says Cynthia.

Her approach centred on a neutral palette that takes a back seat to the 19th-century architecture. She layered in all the creature comforts a traveller could desire. The result is a quiet beauty that's welcoming year-round but takes on a special magic during the holidays, when a light hand is all that's required to infuse festive cheer.

Unadorned evergreens and brown paper packages boasting a pioneer spirit mixed with the glamorous glimmer of gold and bronze amount to a look we admiringly call heritage holiday. Here are the highlights.

5. Past Perfect

The taproom's blue wainscotting speaks to the inn's history. "That hue was taken from a scrap of old hand-painted wallpaper we found under about seven other layers we stripped off," says innkeeper Joanne Oliver.

DINING CHAIR FABRIC, JF Fabrics; spool **CANDLESTICKS,** Hofland.

2. Double Down

A pair of wreaths with pinecones, berries and twine-bound bundles of cinnamon sticks sets an informal country feel at the front doors of the village inn. Hurricane lanterns with pillar candles are subtle nods to the building's coach stop past but boast a more modern air.

LANTERNS, Hofland.

3. Meet & Greet

The front desk's decorations tie tightly into the palette of taupe and black used throughout the inn's principal rooms. A simple black grosgrain ribbon gives the wreath a touch of sophistication alongside luxe magnolia leaves in a brass bowl.

Warm Stone SW 7032 **MILLWORK PAINT,** Sherwin-Williams; brass **BOWLS** (throughout), Hofland.

4. Bar Star

Planted with paperwhites encircled by magnolia leaves, the footed brass bowl offers a subtle festive touch to the bar area of the taproom.

Custom **CABINETRY, COUNTERTOP, CABINETRY HARDWARE,** Chervin Kitchen & Bath; **PENDANT LIGHT,** Uttermost; **STOOLS,** Gresham House Furniture; **STOOL FABRIC,** Fabricut.

6. Scented Style

An arrangement in a cast iron urn lends period formality to the entrance of the inn's restaurant and taproom. Filled with seasonal greenery and punctuated with tall cinnamon sticks, the display offers an appetizing classic Christmas scent that intices potential diners.

URN ARRANGEMENT, Sheridan Nurseries.

7. Runway Magic

A eucalyptus garland casually draped along the dining table and dotted with brass candlesticks is a simple stand-in for a formal centrepiece and creates instant holiday magic.

TABLE RUNNER, Pottery Barn.

8. Star Setting

As an alternative to traditional name cards, a glittery twig ornament at each place setting adds a hint of sparkle that still suits the rustic theme.

Star **ORNAMENTS,** Hofland.

9. Past Presents

In the taproom, a burlap-wrapped miniature evergreen paired with kraft paper-packaged gifts calls to mind how settlers might have celebrated, achieving an authentic old-Ontario holiday vibe.

10. Banister Beauty

A cedar, white pine and seeded eucalyptus garland lines the railing of the main staircase. Undecorated, it lends a rustic look while puddling on the floor for a touch of luxury.

Beauti-Tone Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend WB026-0 **WALL PAINT,** Home Hardware; **WALLPAPER,** Thibaut at Kravet Canada.

11. Light Fantastic

Another example of decorator Cynthia Weber's deft mix of old and new, modern lanterns warm up the entryway's traditional console. The bowl of black and white striped holiday crackers creates a fun festive welcome for guests.

Velvet Elvis FO43-3 **DOOR PAINT,** Home Hardware.

12. Toile Tales

The compelling juxtaposition of the traditional toile wallpaper and the casually unadorned tree in this charming guest room strikes a romantic and authentic seasonal mood.

BEDSKIRT, Walmart.

FOR SOURCES,
SEE OUR WORKBOOK

RECIPES JENNIFER BARTOLI
PHOTOGRAPHY MAYA VISNYEI
FOOD STYLING CLAIRE STUBBS
PROP STYLING ANN MARIE FAVOT

With all the hustle and bustle of Christmas morning, wouldn't it be nice to serve something effortlessly beautiful that doesn't require too much thought? Enter our bountiful breakfast boards – one sweet, one savoury – featuring easy make-ahead recipes that come together with assorted store-bought bits and bites to create dazzling displays that will make even Scrooge's mouth water.

morning glory

Round out your Sweet Breakfast Board

WITH BERRIES, JAMS IN SMALL BOWLS, FRESH ROSEMARY OR MINT, POMEGRANATE SEEDS AND ORANGE WEDGES OR SLICES.

CRÈME FRAÎCHE
with Lavender Honey
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Mini Chocolate & Almond WAFFLES

Simply nothing artificial.
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PICKLED
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Citrus & Dill
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Horseradish
CREAM
CHEESE

Round out your Savoury Breakfast Board

WITH CAPERS, SLICED CUCUMBER, MINI BAGELS, TOMATO SLICES, LEMON WEDGES, DEVILLED EGGS OR HARD-BOILED AND HALVED QUAIL EGGS.

MINI CHOCOLATE & ALMOND WAFFLES

PREP & COOK TIME **1½ HOURS** | MAKES **32**

- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup cocoa powder, sifted
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- 1¾ cups buttermilk
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted
- ½ tsp pure almond extract
- 100 g dark chocolate, melted
- ¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt; set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, buttermilk, butter and almond extract. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until combined.

Using ¾ cup for each waffle, pour the batter onto a hot nonstick waffle iron; close the lid and cook until the batter is crisp and golden and the steam stops, about 5 minutes. Cut each waffle into four pieces; drizzle with the melted chocolate and sprinkle with the almonds.

CRÈME FRAÎCHE WITH LAVENDER HONEY

PREP & COOK TIME **30 MINUTES** | MAKES **1 CUP**

- ½ cup liquid honey
- ½ tsp dried lavender flowers, plus more for garnish
- ¾ cup crème fraîche

In a small saucepan, combine the honey and lavender, stirring until the honey is warmed through. Let stand until the mixture has cooled, about 20 minutes. In a small bowl, combine the crème fraîche with 2 tablespoons of the honey mixture (reserve the rest for another use). Sprinkle with extra lavender and serve with the Mini Chocolate & Almond Waffles.

RASPBERRY COULIS

PREP & COOK TIME **15 MINUTES** | SERVES **10**

- 1 cup fresh or thawed frozen raspberries
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp + 2 tsp water, divided
- 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tsp cornstarch

In a blender, purée the raspberries, sugar and 1 tablespoon water. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a small saucepan, pressing the solids with the back of a spoon and scraping the bottom of the sieve to extract the pulp. Discard the solids.

Stir the lemon juice into the raspberry mixture; stir over medium heat until hot, about 2 minutes. Whisk the cornstarch with the remaining 2 teaspoons water until smooth; stir into the raspberry mixture. Bring to a boil; cook, stirring, until slightly thickened, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat; serve with the Mini Chocolate & Almond Waffles.

CITRUS & DILL GRAVLAX

PREP & COOK TIME **48 HOURS** | SERVES **10**

- 3 tbsp kosher salt
- 2 tbsp vodka
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp orange zest
- 1 lb sushi-grade skin-on salmon
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh dill

In a medium bowl, combine the salt, vodka, brown sugar and orange zest. Rub the mixture all over the salmon. Tightly wrap the salmon in plastic wrap and place in a shallow dish. Top the salmon with a plate and a couple of cans to weigh it down; refrigerate for 48 hours. Unwrap the salmon; remove the skin using a sharp chef's knife. With a butter knife or the edge of a spoon, scrape all the salt mixture off the entire salmon. Sprinkle both sides of the fish with the dill, lightly patting it down to adhere. Thinly slice the salmon; serve.

QUICK PICKLED ONIONS

PREP & COOK TIME **30 MINUTES** | MAKES **½ CUP**

- ¾ cup cider vinegar
- ¾ cup water
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- Half red onion, very thinly sliced

In a medium bowl, whisk together the vinegar, water, sugar and salt; stir in the red onion. Let stand for at least 25 minutes or up to overnight, stirring occasionally. Drain; serve with the Citrus & Dill Gravlax.

CAPER & HORSERADISH CREAM CHEESE

PREP & COOK TIME **20 MINUTES** | MAKES **1 CUP**

- 125 g cream cheese, softened
- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tsp prepared horseradish
- 1 tsp capers, drained and chopped, plus more whole capers for garnish
- 1 tsp chopped fresh dill
- Freshly ground black pepper

Using a handheld electric mixer on medium speed, beat together the cream cheese, lemon juice, horseradish, chopped capers, dill and black pepper in a large bowl until combined; top with the whole capers and a pinch of black pepper. Serve with the Citrus & Dill Gravlax.

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To master the art of baking, you have to be willing to fail beautifully. After all, nothing melted nothing gained. And with their luxurious taste and melt-to-perfection goodness, new ***CHIPITS INSPIRATIONS Chocolate Chunks*** *will ensure that even if your triple-layer cake falls a little flat, the flavours will still rise to the occasion. Discover this and other inspiring recipes at hersheyskitchens.ca.*

Bake on.

out of the woods

Get on board (see what we did there?) with the latest trend and skip the silver platter this season. Serve up your nibbles on an artisanal wooden plank instead.

Create a party-worthy spread with differently shaped boards piled high with fruits, veggies, cheeses, meats, breads and more!

Atelier One Five hardwood **SERVING BOARDS,** from $60 each, Tonic Living, tonicliving.com.

Hook & Stem black walnut **SERVING BOARD** with maple spreader, $58, Brika, brika.com.

Mango wood Streamline **SERVING BOARD** with copper handle, $60, CB2, CB2.com.

Mango wood Amuse **SERVING BOARD,** from $47, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

Black walnut and cherrywood **CUTTING BOARDS,** $120 per set of 2, Atelier East End Mtl, atelieresteendmtl.etsy.com.

Square acacia wood **SERVING BOARD,** $35, Elte Market, eltemkt.com.

Reclaimed wood **SERVING BOARDS,** from $95 US each, Jayson Home, jaysonhome.com.

Apple Cranberry Crisp | 11 g of fibre
Chicken Parmesan | 5 g of fibre
Ultimate Burger | 11 g of fibre
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barlowreid.com

Bau-Xi Gallery
bau-xi.com

Bellacor
bellacor.com

Benjamin Moore
benjaminmoore.ca

Bilbrough & Co.*
bilbroughs.com

BlackLab Architects
blacklabarchitects.com

Blinds Drapes and Bedding
blindsdrapesbedding.ca

C

Caesarstone Canada
caesarstone.ca

Canadian Tire
canadiantire.ca

CB2
cb2.com

Chervin Kitchen & Bath
chervin.ca

Coast Wholesale Appliances
coastappliances.com

Cornerstone Home Interiors
cornerstonefurniture.ca

Crate and Barrel
crateandbarrel.com

The Cross Decor & Design
thecrossdesign.com

Crown Wallpaper & Fabrics*
crownwallpaper.com

Cynthia Weber Design
cynthiaweber.com

D

Delta Faucet
deltafaucet.ca

Design Within Reach
dwr.com

Designer Fabrics
designerfabrics.ca

Douglas Reid Renovations
douglasreid.ca

E

Elte
elte.com

Elte Market
eltemkt.com

F

Fabricut*
fabricut.com

Feasby & Bleeks Design
feasbyandbleeks.com

Fine Interiors by Susan
fineinteriorsbysusan.com

Fiori Oakville
fiorioakville.com

Floralista Flower Studio
floralista.ca

G

Gresham House Furniture
greshamhousefurniture.com

H

Heather Page
heatherpage.ca

Hofland
hofland.com

The Home Depot
homedepot.ca

Home Hardware
homehardware.ca

HomeSense
homesense.ca

Horchow
horchow.com

I

IKEA
ikea.ca

Indigo
indigo.ca

J

JF Fabrics
jffabrics.com

Julie Doan
juliedoan.com

K

KaylaMilligan
laughlovecakes.com

Kravet Canada*
kravetcanada.com

L

Langendoen Custom Building
519-482-9166

M

Manor Interior Design
416-544-1700

Marble Plus
marbleplus.ca

Michaels
michaels.com

Millworx
millworx.ca

Modern Furniture Knockoff
mfkto.com

Mokuba
416-504-5358

Montauk Sofa
montauksofa.com

Mûr
murlifestyle.com

MyKnobs.com
myknobs.com

O

O.co
o.co

P

Paper E. Clips
papereclips.com

Pat Walker
416-766-6272

PCM Project and Construction Management
pcmnow.com

Pine on Bloor
pineonbloor.com

PM Fine Cabinetry
pmfinecabinetry.ca

Pottery Barn
potterybarn.com

Primavera*
primavera.ca

ProSource
prosourcewholesale.com

Putti Fine Furnishings
putti.ca

R

Restoration Hardware
rh.com

Renaissance Home
renaissancehome.ca

Robert Allen*
robertallendesign.com

Rodell Developments
rodellhomes.com

S

Sheridan Nurseries
sheridannurseries.com

Sherwin-Williams
sherwin-williams.com

Silva Custom Furniture
silva4home.com

Sirius
siriuscappe.com

Snob
snobstuff.com

Stacy McLennan Interiors
stacyminteriors.com

Stephanie Jean Design
stephaniejeandesign.com

Sub-Zero and Wolf
subzero-wolf.com

Sweetpea's
sweetpeas.ca

T

Taps Bath Centre
tapsbath.com

Thibaut at Kravet Canada*
thibautdesign.com

Threadcount Textile & Design*
threadcountinc.com

Tile Town
mytiletown.ca

Towerhouse Design + Build
towerhouseconstruction.com

U

Union Lighting and Furnishings
unionlf.com

Urban Outfitters
urbanoutfitters.com

UrbanWalls
uwdecals.com

Uttermost
uttermost.com

W

Walmart
walmart.ca

West Edge Flooring
westedgeflooring@gmail.com

West Elm
westelm.com

William Ashley China
williamashley.com

Z

Zaneen
zaneen.com

***through designers**

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8 display-worthy CAKE STANDS

A festively decorated cake signals the holidays just as well as any bough of holly. Put your confection on a pedestal to savour every moment – from grand reveal to final bite.

Glazed stoneware Gabriella **CAKE STAND,** 12″, $49 US, Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.

Brushed stainless steel **CAKE STAND,** 13″, $45, CB2, cb2.com.

With an elegant marble top and a *contrasting tapered wooden base,* this stylish stand makes a statement, even sans cake.

Marble and mango wood **CAKE STAND,** 12″, $85, Crate and Barrel, crateandbarrel.com.

Acacia wood Skogsta **CAKE STAND,** 14″, $20, IKEA, ikea.ca.

Fitz and Floyd Everyday White porcelain large-footed **CAKE STAND,** 11″, $27, Bed Bath & Beyond, bedbathandbeyond.ca.

Glazed ceramic Scalloped **CAKE STAND,** 11″, $27, Pier 1 Imports, pier1.ca.

Black walnut **CAKE STAND,** 9″, $165, Cattails Woodwork, cattailswoodwork.etsy.com.

Glass **CAKE STAND,** 13″, $45, Williams Sonoma, williams-sonoma.com.

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*MSRP of $23,495 on 2017 Legacy 4dr Sdn 2.5i Base MT (HA125). MSRP excludes Freight & PDI of $1,595. Taxes, license, registration and insurance are extra. $0 security deposit. Model shown is 2017 Legacy 4dr Sdn 3.6R Limited w/ Tech Pkg AT (HA2LE6) with an MSRP of $35,895. Dealers may sell for less or may have to order or trade. Vehicle shown solely for purposes of illustration, and may not be equipped exactly as shown. See your local Subaru dealer for complete program details. **See Owner's Manual for complete details on system operation and limitations. Legacy and Subaru are registered trademarks. †Ratings are awarded by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Please visit www.iihs.org for testing methods.

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